

FREE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PROJECTS FOR POLITICAL ACTION

The Free University of California is starting a series of research projects, informal seminars, and a clearing house of ideas and contacts on current social and political problems. The projects and seminars are intended to provide a source of information for political and civil rights groups, and as a source of education and intellectual stimulation for students of subjects not normally taught at the University. When possible, research projects will be oriented around a seminar on the same subject, with suggestions for research coming from seminar leaders and participants. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP DO RESEARCH ON ANY OF THE TOPICS SUGGESTED BELOW, OR IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST NOT INCLUDED ON THE LIST OF PROJECTS BELOW, PLEASE SIGN YOUR NAME AND INDICATE YOUR INTERESTS. Research projects and seminars will begin around the first of March; quite possibly term papers for regular University courses can be combined. Already the following projects are planned. (Asterisk indicates probable seminar.)

- 1) Oakland: Urban problems and politics
- 2) San Francisco: Urban renewal program and the S.F. power structure.
- 3) Agri-business and agricultural labor.*

Each of these projects is of primary and immediate importance for civil rights and political activities now in operation. Findings on these topics will be used right away. Some prospectuses are attached.

Whatever your interest, or whatever research you would like to have done, the Free University will help you do it, by getting together people who have similar research interests and needs. There is no limit to the possible number of areas of interest in which the Free University could provide coordination or assistance.

If interested, sign up at the table, or call GCC Headquarters at TH-5-6000, ext. 3334, or Ted Hayes at TH-9-4994.

Funds are needed to get these projects going.

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OAKLAND RESEARCH PROJECT----URBAN PROBLEMS AND POLITICS

This is a big project of immediate use to East Bay civil rights groups. The general plan is to divide Oakland into a number of "issue-areas." In all issue-areas we are interested in who the people are who are in authority to make decisions, what their connections are, and what decisions they will and will not make. Perhaps more important, who are the people that most influence decision making by their political or economic power.

Some of the principal issue areas follow, along with a preliminary list of topics within the area on which information is needed.

1. Education. Political rundown of the school board and political history of Oakland school district. What educational services are provided. Cost per pupil. What goes on inside the school. Educational conditions for students and teachers. Comparisons of teaching levels, salary scales, attitudes and atmospheres. How teachers are hired. School discipline. Relationships between students, teachers, and administrators.

2. Housing. Rundowns of official agencies. Housing conditions. Comparative rents. Housing discrimination. Role of real estate and construction interests. Density per room. Bathrooms per person. Enforcement of building codes. Zoning. Neighborhood conditions. Parks. Lighting. Streets maintenance. Can a man making \$2 an hour afford to live in housing built by a man making \$4.75?

3. Welfare. Welfare rights. Administration of welfare programs. What local, state and federal laws is the county not implementing. Who decides how welfare programs will be administered. Does anyone make big money out of welfare?

4. Job creation. Implementation of existing laws. Unemployment. Causes and problems of unemployment. Unemployment patterns. Discriminatory hiring. Attraction of new industry. Power structure's attitudes toward unemployment. Discrimination in financing and support of new business. Role of Labor.

5. Police and Court practices. Police quotas. Brutality. Arrestees' rights. How police get promotions. Hiring of police. What they are taught. Treatment of people by courts. Bail. Sentencing. Fines. Police files, spying, use of undercover agents. Phone tapping. Police influence on urban politics and economics. Who influences the police. Penal practices in city and county jails.

6. Politics. A. Political structure. Survey of office-holding power structure. Election laws and districting. Connections of people in power/ Campaigning practices. What decisions and laws get made. Who has influence, who plays along?

B. Economic power structure. Who are the major industries, holders of real estate, employers, taxpayers. Who does the most business with the city and county governments. What influence do they have on lawmaking and urban problems listed above.

To work on this project sign up at the table or call Ted Hayes at TH 9 4994 or Charles Bordin at TH 3 0767.

SAN FRANCISCO URBAN RENEWAL RESEARCH TOPICS--PROSPECTUS.

Identify "researchable" topics in urban renewal problems concerning San Francisco. It is possible that an informal seminar can be run on the techniques, problems, and power relationships of Urban renewal in San Francisco.

The following is an outline of needed research subjects.

1. Power Structure Analysis.

a) Examiner-Chronicle publishers, and political biographies of members of political agencies concerned with urban renewal--- the Public Housing Authority, Redevelopment Commission, the Board of Supervisors.

b) Fillmore Merchants Association, particularly its connections with the projects included in Redevelopment Area Two, the Fillmore Shopping Center, the Japanese Cultural Center and the Mihon Machi (Japanese Town).

c) All real estate and investment companies with holdings in Area Two.

2. An up-to-date list of all property owners in Area Two.

3. A handbook of procedures, legalities, etc. for setting up cooperative, low-income housing developments and small business cooperatives in a redevelopment area.

4. A handbook of tenant rights and housing codes and regulations.

5. A handbook of welfare recipients' rights in San Francisco.

6. An outline of the procedures necessary to place a referendum on the San Francisco ballot, and how to recall members of the S.F. Board of supervisors.

This is only a partial list of possible research ideas. Any other topics of specific interest to you will be included.

On Wednesday, Dec. 2, 1964, we, you and I, brought the Multiversity--the supposed educational juggernaut of Twentieth Century American Society--to a grinding, staggering halt. We literally threw our bodies on the line; we told not only The Machine but the whole country that we were not going to be processed for the benefit of society; we were not going to be intellectually socialized so as to fit smoothly into the shallow groove of the status quo. We dared to claim we could think for ourselves; we dared to think we were free citizens in a free country, standing up for what we knew was right and being proud of ourselves for doing it. But stopping the machine is not enough. We must show the community and the country what our talents and our energies can create. We must work towards a university environment in which we are strong, respected, and free to learn -- we must create a

FREE UNIVERSITY

Freedom to Learn Classes

Students and faculty are already initiating new projects. There are extra groups to supplement and criticize already existing courses, and new groups for topics which UC can't or won't offer: eg. Prof. Legget has a council of students, elected by each of his sections, which will meet frequently to work out the ideas that come from the students about improving his courses.

Other students have begun to form groups on Higher Education, First and Fourteenth Amendments, Marx and Freud, Labor History, History of the Oppression of Women, Bead Game Theory, Music - Participation in and Social History of.

Research will also get under way by Grads and Undergrads into the nature and structure of both departments and the University as a whole, as to how courses get required, what the financial pipelines are and who controls the taps, etc.

Research Projects will also be launched for community members - labor, migrant workers, tenants - who do not currently share the fruits of U.C. research with the community power structure.

A most important part of the Free University is the communications network that we will need. The G.C.C. office (Ext. 3334, Bancroft and Dana behind the Unitarian Church) will act for now as coordinator of ideas and work, with further systems to be set up next week. Attend the U.A.-G.C.C. student departmental meetings at the times and places announced on the other sheet, sign at our tables, or contact the G.C.C. office so that we can get ourselves and our ideas together. There will be our Journals, writing and publishing, our FUNewsletter, work in our library, and press and community relations to be done also.

Try to take only 12 units this time around so that you will have more time for your education and your ideas. Now is the time for action; we demand the right to learn. We must heal the schism between current educational whitewash and the realities of our society.

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FREE UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN CALIFORNIA

College of Humane Letters and Sciences

101. AGRICULTURE AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

A course combining instruction, research, and action, in an area which is crucial, and promises to remain crucial, particularly in California, and in which there is a particular paucity of adequate instruction or research available in the traditional educational establishment.

Coordinator: Henry Anderson, free-lance writer and commentator; chairman, Citizens for Farm Labor; co-editor, Farm Labor Magazine; former Director of Research, Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO.

Meets Fridays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., 1624 Grove Street, Berkeley.

Seminar 1, March 5: Introduction to Agriculture and the Social Order. The place of agriculture in the economy and political structure of California and the United States. Agriculture still the largest generator of wealth.

Trends: from "family farm" to corporation. Mechanization. Marketing procedures. Agri-industry: ties between agricultural corporations and finance and insurance, transportation, retailing, etc.

Questions: is the "family farm" an anachronism? is there any point in talking about it in the midst of an increasingly industrialized, urbanized, centralized social order? To what extent can agriculture be automated? How fast? With what effects?

Suggested readings: Walter Goldschmidt, As You Sow; Carey McWilliams, Factories in the Field; National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Farm Research and Legislative Committee, and Giannini Foundation publications.

Seminar 2, March 12: Agriculture and the University of California. The peculiar ties between the University and this one industry. The Morrill Act (1862), establishing the land grant college system, for the primary purpose of teaching agricultural and mechanical arts. The Smith-Lever Act (1915), requiring land grant colleges to maintain Agricultural Extension Services. Relationship with the Farm Bureau. Role of Dean of Agriculture in founding Associated Farmers of California (1925). The Giannini Foundation: how it was started; what it does. Involvement of University agricultural administrators in agricultural politics: J. Earl Coke; George Mehran; Daniel Aldrich; Eric Thor; etc. Direct suppression: bracero studies and reports. Suppression by omission: not a single course in agricultural labor relations taught on any campus of the University.

Questions: are the Morrill and Smith-Lever Acts relevant to mid-20th Century higher education? Do special-interest research institutes, such as the Giannini Foundation, have a proper place on a University campus? Can University be free, with respect to agricultural concerns, when it is dependent for funds on a rural-dominated legislature?

Seminar 3, March 19: Agricultural Labor, the Great Exception. Agricultural labor excluded from minimum wages, unemployment insurance, child labor, overtime, collective bargaining, Fair Employment Practices, health and safety, and other state and federal legislation. Agricultural laborers the sole group which must compete with foreign contract workers.

Seminar 3 (continued).

Agriculture the sole industry guaranteed a labor surplus by government agencies. Agriculture the sole industry in which wages and working conditions set, not by operations of supply and demand, or by collective bargaining, but arbitrarily and artificially by employers alone, or by an alliance of employers and government agencies.

Questions: what happens, economically, when the law of supply and demand is blocked? What happens, sociologically and psychologically, when a particular occupational group is singled out for discrimination? How can the statutory exclusions of agricultural workers be reconciled with the 14th Amendment to the Constitution?

Seminar 4, March 26: The Case for Agricultural Uniqueness.

Review of the major arguments employed to perpetuate the differential treatment of agriculture and agricultural workers at the hands of the law, the executive agencies, and the courts. "Rugged individualism." "Too many producers, too widely dispersed." "At the mercy of Mother Nature." "Perishability of products." "Seasonality." "Cost-price squeeze." "Competition from lower-wage areas." ~~Even~~ "Housewives' strikes." Etc.

Suggested readings: Hearings of House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor, on extension of Fair Labor Standards Act. Hearings of California Industrial Welfare Commission on Agricultural Wage Order. Publications of Council of California Growers, Agricultural Producers Labor Committee, Associated Farmers, etc.

Suggested action: attendance at Sacramento hearings of Industrial Welfare Commission.

Seminar 5, ~~xxxxxx~~ April 2: The Case against Agricultural Uniqueness.

Review of the major arguments for ending the differential status of agriculture and agricultural labor in the statute books, in public opinion, in institutions of higher learning, etc. Equal protection of the law. Feasibility of rationalizing the industry. Benefits to employers, ancillary businessmen, consumers, and others, as well as workers themselves.

Suggested readings: Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee research papers; Fields of Bondage; Farm Labor Magazine.

Suggested action: attendance at legislative hearings on agricultural labor bills, and House Committee on Education and Labor. Talks with and communications with public policy makers, union officials, etc.

Seminar 6, April 9: A Program for Equal Rights.

Amendment of McCarran-Walter Act to remove possibility of foreign contract labor. Testing of discriminatory legislation in courts. Testing of rights of citizens to communicate with agricultural workers in "company towns." Consumer education: leafleting, boycotts, etc. Nonviolent direct action in cases of worker harassment and degradation, importation of foreign contract laborers, etc. Publication of studies on Giannini Foundation, Farm Placement Service, etc.

Field Experience, April 16-22:

Trying to obtain jobs in sugar beet thinning, asparagus cutting, strawberry cultivation, etc., through Farm Placement Service, through labor contractor "shape-ups," and by going directly to the fields. Teams to Salinas, ~~Watson~~ Gilroy, Stockton, Woodland, etc. Scrupulous diaries kept on hours worked, wages, housing, attitude of Farm Placement Representatives, contractors, foremen, fellow workers, etc.

Final Seminar, April 23: Where Do We Go From Here?

Gathering of all those who had field experience, as well as those who did not, to recapitulate findings and impressions. Decision as to whether to continue studying, and if so in what areas; whether to conduct research, and if so on what questions; whether to carry on action, and if so, what types, and under what banner (e.g., political action and public education with Citizens for Farm Labor; helping farm worker service programs, such as AFSC, Stiles Hall, and Migrant Ministry; doing pre-organizing with Farm Workers Association, Porterville group, Oxnard group, etc.)